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THE COPYRIGHT LAWS.

We are pleased to observe that the Board of Trade of the City of Toronto, a few days ago had under consideration the present state of the copyright laws, as far as they affect Canada, and have forwarded the following petition to Parliament. This document speaks for itself, and we hope the outcome will be that we in Canada will be granted permission to make our own copyright regulation with authors and publishers in countries where no international copyright treaty exists with Britain :

1. That the Imperial Copyright Law, which has jurisdiction in Canada, presents many anomalies in its operations in the Colonies ; is prejudicial to the interests of British authors and publishers, whom it is designed to benefit ; limits the operations and retards the development of the Canadian book trade, and has an injurious effect on all the industries connected with native publishing.

2. That the proximity of Canada to the neighbouring Republic, where there is unrestrained license in reprinting English copyrights, and every freedom in sending them into this country, makes the position of Canada an exceptional one in calling for relief from these anomalies, and in asking the Home Government to concede to Canada the privilege of legislating on copyright in accordance with our special needs, and for the protection of such interests as it is desirable to make provision for, and with the same freedom we now possess in legislating on patents.

3. That while the present copyright law prohibits the Canadian publisher from reprinting English copyrights in Canada, and places him under penalties for violating the Act, it suffers American reprints (which, in the main, pay no royalty to the author or copyright owner) to enter the country, and practically gives the supplying of the entire book market of Canada to a foreign people.

4. That common sense as well as policy dictates that the privileges we give to the foreign manufacturer should be given to the native publisher, while the effect of this would speedily be seen in the development of our own publishing industries, and would enable the English author to derive some benefit from the sale of his works in Canada.

5. That were the Canadian publishing trade free to reprint English copyrights, with due recognition of

the author's rights, he would not only be in a position to supply the wants of our own people (now supplied by the foreigner), but it would be within his power to extend the area of his operations into the United States, and there endeavour to compete with the piratical American reprint.

6. That the effect of this might sensibly aid the efforts made in Congress to do justice to the British author, by the passing of an International Copyright Treaty.

7. That so long as the United States make no reciprocal concessions in the matter of literature to Britain or to British Colonies, Canada should be exempt from respecting the copyright privilege granted by the mother country to American writers, who may produce their works first in England.

That for all these reasons assigned, your memorialists pray your Honourable House to press upon Government the wisdom and policy of securing from the Home Government the right to legislate upon the whole subject of copyright, domestic and foreign, as may be deemed best for all interests concerned, and with due regard to Canadian publishing industries, and the intellectual and social benefit of the Canadian people.

SENATOR HAWLEY'S Copyright Bill gives foreigners copyrights here only when their governments reciprocally give us copyright. It is much more concise than the bill introduced last year by Mr. Dorsheimer. It puts the American law on the same footing as the English law. By the latter, the Queen can, by order in Council, direct that foreign authors shall be entitled to copyright in her dominions when the foreign author's country has granted reciprocal rights ; and Senator Hawley's last clause confers the same power on the President ; the proclamation of the President is to be proof that such equality of rights exist. The vexed question of manufacture would thus be left to be settled by the high contracting parties. There seems no hope of anything being done in the matter, and therefore the American author will have still to stand the competition with the English reprints, which pay no royalty, and the publisher whose enterprise secures advance sheets will still be undersold by an active pirate. Meanwhile, the public conscience is being corrupted, and the public mind trained to look on books as so much